

PROMOTING EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL STUDENTS

WHEREAS, 49 years after the Supreme Court's decision in Brown v. Board of Education, a significant educational opportunity gap exists within states for low-income, urban, rural, and minority students; and

WHEREAS, closing that gap is critical to ensuring the continued existence of a strong economy, workforce, and informed citizenry in our nation; and

WHEREAS, the fundamentals of equal educational opportunity means that all students have access to quality teachers and principals, rigorous curricula, small classes, up-to-date textbooks and materials, safe school buildings and well-stocked school libraries; computers in the classroom, and adequate numbers of guidance counselors; and

WHEREAS, H.R. 236, "The Student Bill of Rights," has been introduced in the 108th House of Representatives by Representative Chaka Fattah(D-PA), and companion legislation will soon be introduced in the U.S. Senate by Senator Christopher Dodd (D-CT); and

WHEREAS, "The Student Bill of Rights" aims to ensure that each state provides equal educational opportunity to all its students by requiring each state to report to the U.S. Secretary of Education on each school district and school's access to the fundamentals outlined above; and

WHEREAS, H.R. 236 (as introduced) requires states to establish three levels of access B basic, adequate, and ideal B to the fundamentals of education opportunity, and requires schools to make adequate yearly progress so that within 12 years, all schools have at least access to each fundamental; and

WHEREAS, "The Student Bill of Rights," (H.R. 236) requires the Secretary to report to Congress and the public on the adequacy of each state's public school system; and

WHEREAS, "The Student Bill of Rights" is designed to further the goals of the ***No Child Left Behind Act of 2001***, which requires that all students meet rigorous academic standards in 12 years, and that all schools make adequate yearly progress toward such standards in the same time period; and

WHEREAS, the legislation has the support of more than 100 Members of Congress and more than two dozen advocacy and education groups, including the National PTA, Council of the Great City Schools, National Council of La Raza, NAACP, and The Children's Defense Fund,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that The United States Conference of Mayors endorses the principles of H.R. 236, The Student Bill of Rights; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that The U.S. Conference of Mayors urges the U.S. Congress to pass, and the President of the United States to sign this legislation promoting the ability of all schools to

provide the fundamentals of equal educational opportunity for all students in the United States of America.